PATTERN EUROPE

Peak Season Preparedness Report

How to win every moment that matters on Amazon.

*See important disclosures on page 17

Foreword

Every year, the same question comes up: **when should we start preparing for peak season?**

Earlier than you think. The brands that win on Amazon don't get lucky. They plan months ahead, align their teams, lock in their inventory, and build their ad strategies long before consumers start searching.

This report is here to make that easier. It brings together the strategies we use at Pattern, the results we've seen across our European partner portfolio, and the frameworks that separate standout seasons from disappointing ones.

It's written for brand teams at any stage of their Amazon journey. Whether you're heading into your first major event or building on a strong previous year, the fundamentals don't change. What changes is how early and how precisely you apply them.

We hope it's useful. And if you'd like to talk through what it means for your brand specifically, we're always up for that conversation.

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The Peak Season *landscape*

Peak season isn't a moment anymore. It's a sustained stretch that now defines the ecommerce calendar. For brands on Amazon, the peak season window is when a disproportionate share of that annual spend is captured or lost. In Europe, four events sit at the heart of it.

Spring Deal Days

Spring Deal Days runs in late March and early April, making it the first major Amazon sales event of the year. It's grown steadily in scale and consumer awareness, and for brands it represents an important early opportunity to drive new customer acquisition, test promotional structures, and build sales momentum ahead of the summer. Pattern's European experience shows the event consistently rewards brands that treat it as a serious commercial moment rather than a secondary event.

Amazon Prime Day

Taking place every summer, Prime Day has grown from a single day promotional flash sale into one of the biggest shopping events of the year. Consumer awareness and participation continue to grow across Europe, and the event's reach now extends well beyond Amazon itself. Emerging marketplaces including Otto and Zalando increasingly contribute meaningful volume during the Prime Day window, reflecting a broader shift in how European shoppers engage with peak season events.

October Prime (Big Deal Days)

October Prime has earned its place on the calendar. It's no longer just a secondary event. Shoppers increasingly use it as a preview to Black Friday, doing their research and committing to mid ticket and essential purchases before November hits. Early demand tends to be slower, but performance across the event is steady and growing.

Black Friday & Cyber Monday

BFCM is the main event. Demand across the 12 day window consistently outpaces the rest of the year by a significant margin, with Black Friday driving the highest concentration of daily sales. In the UK, Cyber Monday order volume has consistently outpaced Black Friday in recent years, and European online spend across the four day core BFCM period continues to set new records annually.

The thread connecting all four events is intent. Shoppers don't stumble into peak season. They research, compare, and wait. The opportunity is real, but so is the competition. Poor preparation shows up in the results.

1. Treat it as a pipeline

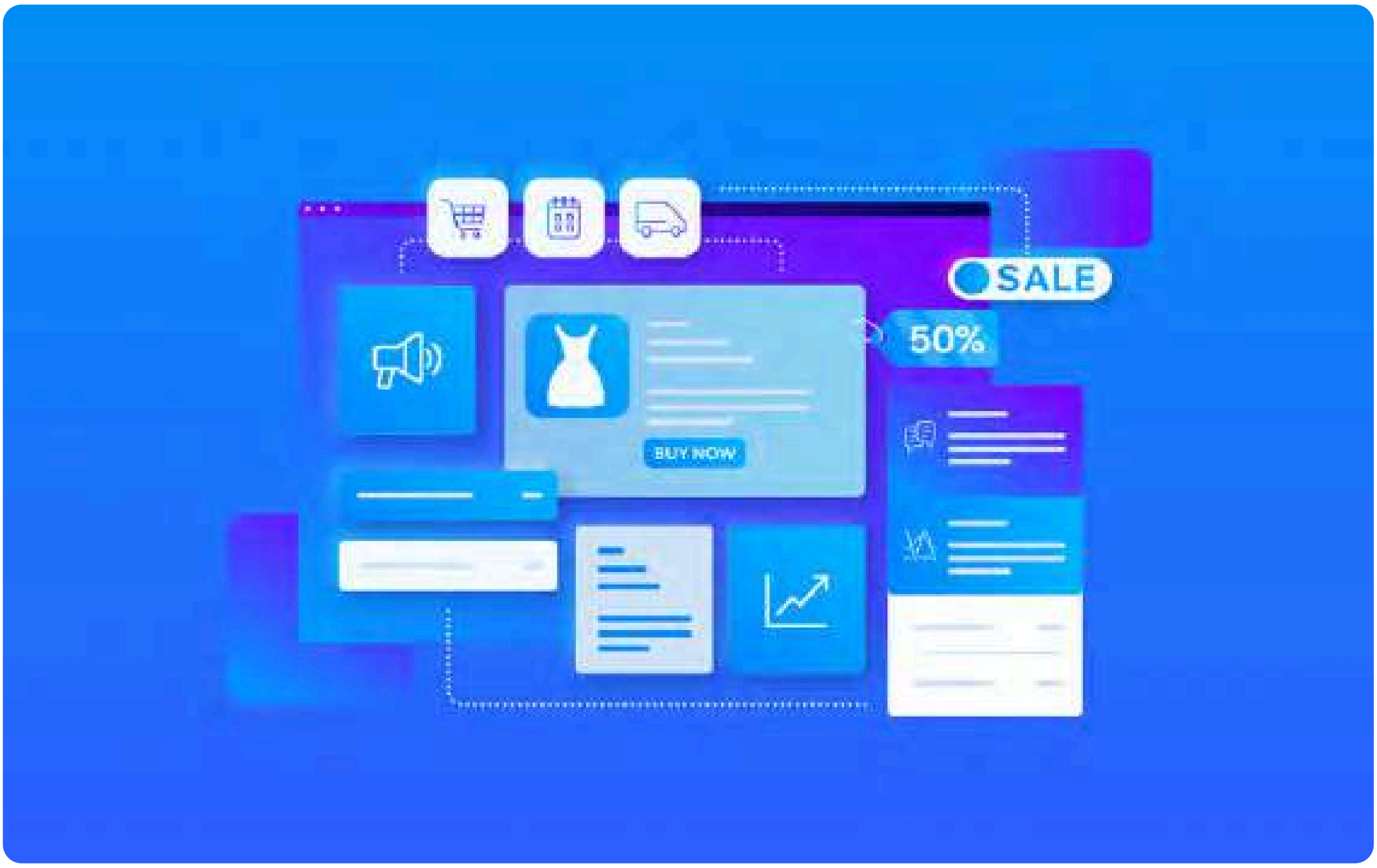
Preparation for each event begins months before it opens.

2. Start with stock

If you run out of stock during an event, you lose the sale, the ranking, and the momentum. Competitors will fill the gap.

3. Deal depth matters

Amazon's top placement tiers require minimum discount thresholds. Brands that promote at the wrong depth get visibility without the conversion to match it.



The Peak Season *calendar*

One of the most common mistakes brands make is treating preparation as an after the event checklist. The reality is that it starts months earlier, often before the last event's results have even been reviewed.

The timeline below maps out the four key events of the year and when preparation should begin for each. Think of it less as a deadline planner and more as a pipeline. Activity for one event often overlaps with preparation for the next.

2026 peak season calendar

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Spring Deal Days (March)	Deal Subs	SPRING DEALS										
Amazon Prime Day (July)		Inv. Planning		Deal Subs	Event Prep	PRIME DAY						
October Prime/ Big Deal Days (October)								Inv. Planning	Deal Subs	OCT PRIME		
Black Friday and Cyber Monday (November)									Inv. Planning	Deal Subs	BFCM PREP	BFCM EVENT

The big takeaway

Inventory decisions for BFCM need to be made in August, not October. Deal submissions for Prime Day and Spring Deal Days happen months in advance. If you're starting six weeks out, you're already behind.

The *8 pillars* of peak season preparedness

The brands that outperform across all four peak season events share one thing in common: they prepare across all the right areas, not just the obvious ones. Pattern's approach is built around eight interconnected pillars. When all eight are working together, the results speak for themselves.

The 8 Pillars: Peak Season Strategic Priority

1. Strategic Promotion Planning

Joint business planning with each brand to map deal strategies, incremental revenue targets and new customer acquisition goals.

2. Deal Submissions and Platform Relationships

Leveraging Amazon relationships to unlock top placements and gain support for smooth deal launches.

3. Inventory Management and Forecasting

Forecasting at product level for every deal, with close partner collaboration on intake management months before each event.

4. Advertising Strategy

Custom brand advertising campaigns with real time optimisations to drive efficient deal visibility and conversion.

5. Content and Listing Optimisation

Ensuring every listing is fully optimised before the event window opens, with brand content that supports deal visibility.

6. Operational Readiness

A dedicated team working around the clock to verify every deal goes live exactly as planned on event day.

7. Contingency Planning

Plans prepared in advance to account for deal suppressions and minimise the revenue impact of any operational issues.

8. Reporting and Post Event Analysis

Tailored pre, during and post event analysis, giving partners the insight they need for continuous improvement.

The sections below unpack each pillar in detail, with what good looks like and what the results show when they're executed well

1. Strategic Promotion Planning

The most successful peak seasons don't start in the weeks before the event. They start months earlier, in joint planning sessions where brands and their ecommerce partners map out the full year together.

Brands that enter peak season with a jointly built promotional plan are consistently better positioned to capture demand as it evolves, rather than reacting to it after the fact.

2. Deal Submissions and Platform Relationships

On Amazon, not all deals are equal. Where a deal appears, and how prominently, has a direct bearing on its commercial outcome. Getting those placements isn't just about submitting on time. It takes an ongoing relationship with Amazon's deals team and a track record of operational reliability.

For brands working with Pattern, this is a meaningful advantage. The depth of our Amazon relationships means partners get stronger placements and smoother event execution than most could achieve independently. Across Pattern's European portfolio, top deal placements consistently account for the largest share of event revenue.

Getting deals live and keeping them live matters just as much. Pattern's operational approach to deal monitoring consistently keeps suppression rates low, with the large majority of sourced ASINs running without issue across events.

Placement determines outcome

Where a deal appears on Amazon generally determines how much it sells. Top placements require relationships built well before the event.

Every deal needs to be live and correct from the first minute

Issues surfaced at launch can be fixed in minutes. Issues spotted later in the morning have already cost you the peak converting hours of the event.

Speed of response is everything

Suppressions and discounting errors at launch cost revenue that cannot be recovered. The brands that lose the least plan for it in advance.

3. Inventory Management and Forecasting

Stockouts during peak events don't just cost immediate revenue. They suppress organic ranking, disrupt advertising efficiency, and hand sales to competitors at exactly the moment when intent is highest. Good preparation means this doesn't happen.

Staying in stock wins the event

A stockout during peak season isn’t just a missed sale. It reduces your ranking and your ad efficiency, and recovery can take weeks.

Plan for the demand tail

The days after a peak event carry meaningful residual demand. Brands that sell through and fail to restock quickly miss a second wave of purchase intent.

Clear excess before the next event

Excess inventory left over from one event ties up capital and limits your ability to build stock for the next.

4. Advertising Strategy

Peak season advertising isn't about spending more. It's about spending precisely, with campaigns built specifically for the event and optimised in real time as conditions shift.

Advertising drives a material share of revenue

Advertising is not a supporting channel during peak season. For brands that prepare properly, it accounts for a significant share of total event revenue.

Efficiency holds when campaigns are built early

CPCs spike sharply during peak events. Brands with campaign structures already tested and optimised hold their efficiency. Those without can burn through their budget in the first 48 hours.

Real time optimisation separates winners from wasters

Monitoring bids, budgets, and placements in real time throughout the event is what keeps performance efficient as conditions shift.

5. Content and Listing Optimisation

Traffic is higher during peak events than at any other point in the year. Every percentage point of conversion has a magnified impact. Listings that aren't fully optimised before the event opens leave that uplift on the table.

Being fully optimised means:
- A+ content that communicates value at a glance
- Titles optimised for the search terms that spike during deal periods
- Imagery that works in the compressed format of a deals page
- A listing that builds trust from the shopper's first impression

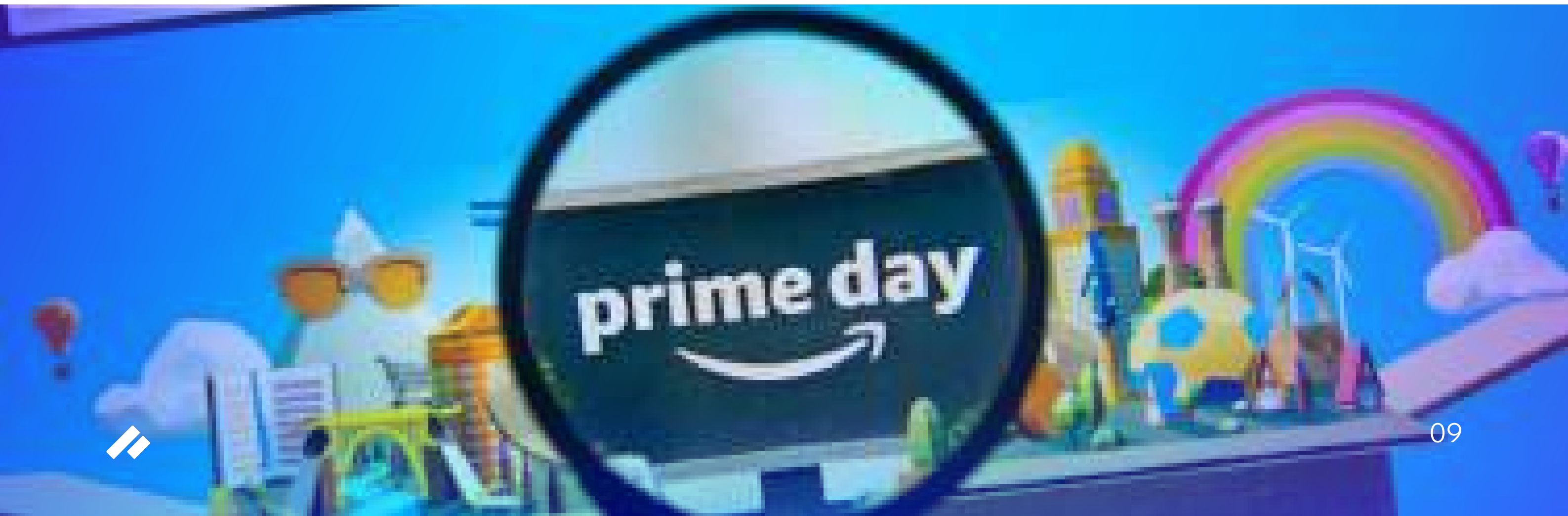
Content optimisation needs to be done before the event opens, not during it. Once things kick off, the focus should be on advertising and operations, not fixing listing errors under pressure

6. Operational Readiness

When an event goes live at midnight, every deal should be live and discounted correctly from the first minute. The data shows why. Shoppers in the early hours of Day 1 drive the single largest concentration of hourly sales across the entire event, with the 6 to 10am window alone accounting for a disproportionate share of total event revenue.
Any discounting error or suppressed deal in those hours is lost revenue you can't recover.

The approach is layered: automated monitoring scans every deal ASIN across all EU marketplaces at launch, flagging pricing errors and suppressions in real time.
A dedicated team then manually verifies the ASINs that drive the majority of revenue.
For brands managing this independently, the overnight operational requirement often goes unmet until the peak converting hours have already passed.

For brands with presence across the UK, Germany, France, Spain, and Italy, this operational layer becomes even more important. European shopping peaks at different hours to the US: Adyen data shows the busiest Black Friday hour in Germany is 9pm, and in Italy it’s 7pm, compared to midday in the US. Getting deals live and verified before those national peaks is the difference between capturing demand at its highest point and missing it entirely.



7. Contingency Planning

No peak season runs perfectly. Deals get suppressed. Stock shifts. Marketplace systems slow down. The brands that handle these moments well aren't the ones who are surprised by them. They're the ones who already had a plan.

Good contingency planning means identifying the most likely failure points before each event and having a response ready for each. What happens if a top deal ASIN is suppressed at launch? What is the backup if a key product goes out of stock on day one? Who has the authority to make real time calls, and how fast can they move?

Having those answers before the event means the response is fast and measured, not slow and reactive. The brands that lose the least to suppression are the ones who planned for it.

8. Reporting and Post Event Analysis

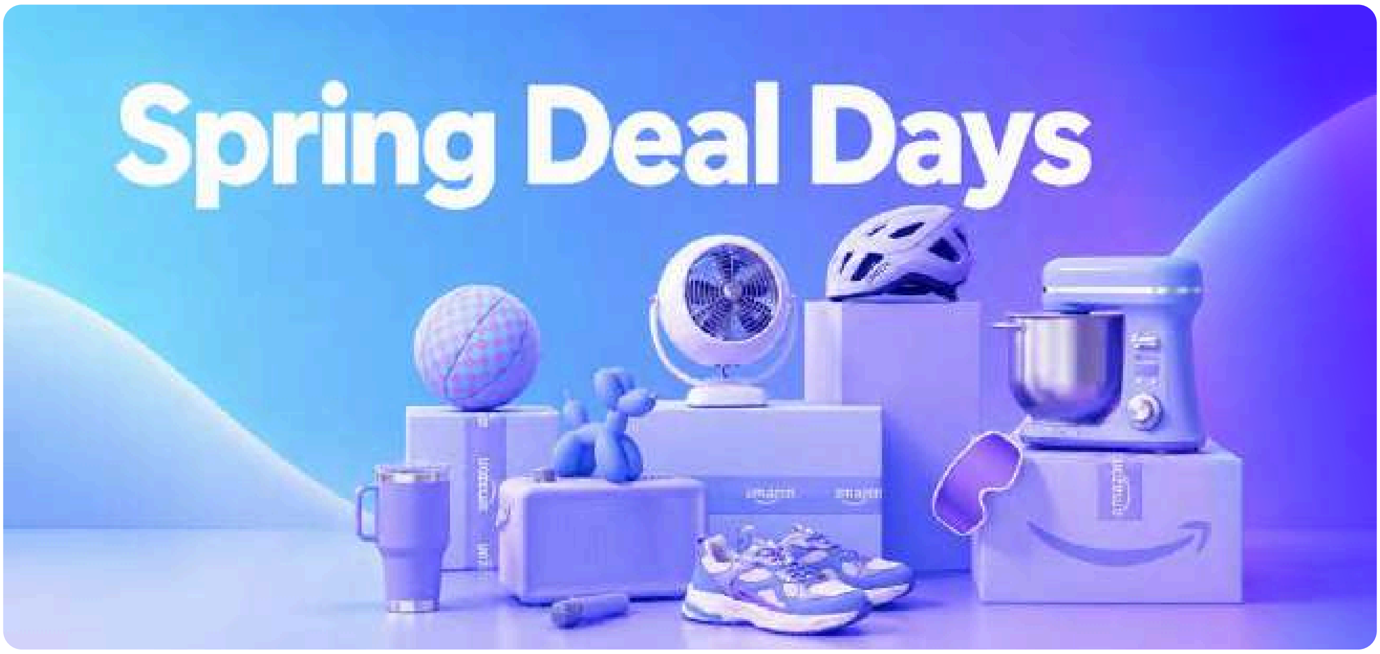
The work doesn't end when the event does. Post event analysis is what makes each peak season better than the last. The questions every brand should be answering:

- Which ASINs overperformed and why?
- Which campaigns were most efficient?
- Which marketplaces responded strongest?
- Where did inventory constraints cost revenue?
- What would we do differently next time?

Event by event: what to expect

While the eight pillars apply across all four major events, each event has its own character, consumer dynamics and commercial patterns. Here's what brands need to know about each one.

Spring Deal Days



Spring Deal Days runs across seven days in late March and early April. It's the first major commercial moment of the year and plays a distinct role in the peak season calendar:

- The earliest opportunity to acquire new customers before the summer events begin
- A lower pressure environment to test promotional and advertising structures
- A broader marketplace moment: Otto, eBay, TikTok Shop, and Bol all run deals alongside Amazon
- Demand consistently outpaces forecast when brands prepare deal strategy and inventory early

Demand regularly exceeds forecast

Brands that prepare early consistently absorb demand surges more effectively than those relying on reactive planning.

Advertising plays a growing role

Advertising is a primary driver of Spring Deal Days performance, with ROAS improving as campaigns aligned to the deal benefit from rising purchase intent.

Spring Deal Days is your dress rehearsal

The operational, forecasting, & advertising processes you run here directly shape your readiness for the events that follow. Treat it seriously, even with modest expectations.

Amazon Prime Day

Prime Day is Amazon's own event, and that shapes everything about it. Amazon invests heavily in promoting it, so the traffic spike is real. For brands, the big opportunity is new customer acquisition. Prime Day shoppers browse beyond their usual repertoire, which makes it one of the best moments in the year to introduce a product to consumers who wouldn't normally find it.

Consumers are increasingly savvy about Prime Day pricing. Some intentionally hold off to see if better offers come during BFCM. That creates softer early demand, which brands should plan for, particularly in higher ticket discretionary categories.

In the UK, Prime Day 2025 online sales hit £2.08 billion across the four day event, making it the biggest UK Amazon shopping event on record, up 11.1% year on year according to Adobe Digital Insights. The first day alone saw £676.5 million in UK online spend. Across Pattern's European Prime Day portfolio, the concentration of revenue is significant: a small proportion of promoted ASINs typically drives the large majority of event sales, which makes deal selection one of the most impactful decisions a brand can make before Prime Day.

Prime Day is a new customer acquisition moment

Prime Day draws shoppers outside their usual brand repertoire. It is the strongest event of the year for reaching consumers who have never bought from you.

Losing the Buy Box during peak season wastes ad spend

During peak events, the Buy Box winner captures the overwhelming majority of sales. Advertising spend on a listing without the Buy Box drives clicks that convert for a competitor.

Early sales velocity shapes the rest of the event

Amazon's algorithm rewards momentum. Products that build strong sales in the opening hours of an event carry that ranking advantage throughout, amplifying the impact of every subsequent click.

Amazon October Prime / Big Deal Days

October Prime is where shoppers start their Christmas research in earnest.
It's not a smaller Prime Day. It has its own distinct consumer profile and commercial purpose.

The consumer profile skews mid ticket and essential. Higher ticket discretionary spend is softer here than at BFCM. For premium brands, October Prime is more valuable as a visibility and new customer moment than a pure revenue driver.

Operationally, October Prime is also a dry run. The forecasting, advertising, and operational processes you run here directly inform BFCM preparation. Brands that take it seriously, even with modest commercial expectations, tend to go into BFCM in better shape.

Black Friday and Cyber Monday

BFCM is the main event. Intent is at its highest, deal awareness is at its broadest, and the competition is at its most intense. Shopping behaviour in Europe has extended well beyond the traditional Friday and Monday window. Black November is real, and deal seeking activity now runs across the entire month. In 2025, Europe delivered 25% year on year growth during the BFCM weekend, outperforming North America's 12% uplift, according to Global-e. UK shoppers spent £5 billion in online purchases across the four days of Black Friday to Cyber Monday, according to Adobe Analytics.

Several consumer trends are reshaping BFCM and are likely to persist. Shopping behaviour driven by sustained inflationary pressure has made deal depth more important than it was in previous years. European shopping patterns also vary significantly by market: in the UK, Black Friday remains the focal point with a 16.8% year-on-year increase in clicks in 2025, while French shoppers are increasingly shifting spend earlier, with net sales on the day before Black Friday surging 64% year on year, according to Rakuten Advertising. European countries consistently outpace the US in the ratio of Black Friday spend versus a typical trading day, reflecting how deeply the event has embedded itself in European consumer behaviour.

The BFCM opportunity is large but concentrated. Deal selection, depth, and promotional structure determine whether a brand captures its share or watches it pass.

Most BFCM revenue comes from a minority of promoted ASINs

The majority of BFCM revenue flows through a minority of promoted ASINs. Precise deal selection determines whether a brand captures its share of the event

Optimise for mobile or lose the sale

Mobile now accounts for the majority of ecommerce transactions during peak events across Europe. Content and listings that are not optimised for mobile are leaving conversion on the table.

Black November has extended the window across the full month

Brands that treat BFCM as a single weekend consistently underperform those that plan for sustained demand across the entire month.

A simple framework for prioritisation

Peak season is a prioritisation problem. You have limited inventory, limited ad budget, and a short window to capture demand. This matrix gives you a simple way to sort your catalog into four buckets, so you know exactly where to push, where to pull back, and where to keep a close eye. Use it to make faster decisions with more confidence during your highest-stakes selling days.

ASIN prioritisation matrix for peak events

	SUFFICIENT INVENTORY	AT-RISK INVENTORY
HIGH UPLIFT POTENTIAL	**Promote hard** • Inventory secured • Strong uplift history • High margin • Gateway & NTB priority	**Promote selectively** • Inventory at risk • High uplift potential • Seasonal / event-relevant • Watch closely
LOW UPLIFT POTENTIAL	**Let it ride** • Inventory secured • Low uplift history • No deal needed	**Avoid promoting** • Inventory at risk • Low uplift potential • Risk of stockout

Promote hard

High inventory + high uplift potential
Your peak-season priority products. Allocate your strongest deal support, highest ad investment, and best creative here.

Promote selectively

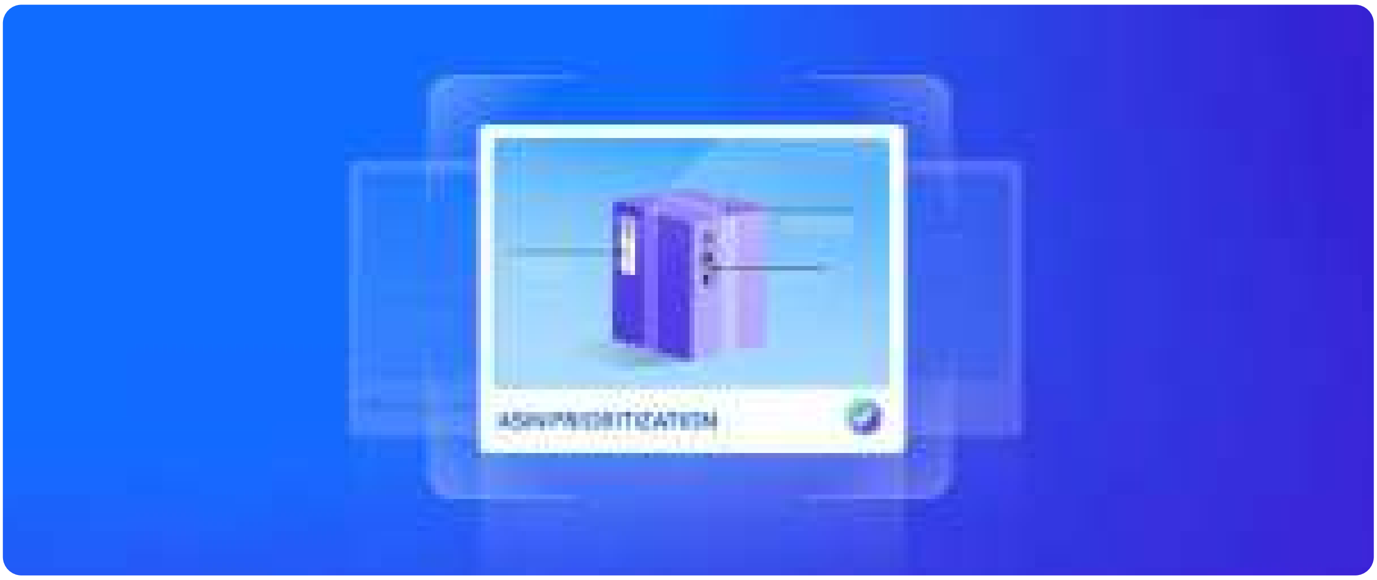
Lower inventory + high uplift potential
Products that can perform well but require closer inventory monitoring and tighter budget control.

Let it ride

High inventory + lower uplift potential
Products that may benefit from increased peak traffic without requiring dedicated deal investment.

Avoid promoting

Low inventory + low uplift potential
Reserve these for post-event demand rather than pushing during peak windows.



Which deal types drive *the most impact*

Not all promotions perform the same during peak events, and not all deal types are available to every product. Eligibility varies significantly depending on the deal type, and understanding what each product actually qualifies for should come before building a promotional plan.

Amazon peak event deal types: eligibility and access

From most exclusive to most accessible

Deal Type	Amazon Nomination	Min Star Rating	Min Discount	Visibility Badge	Event Placement	Accessibility	Fee
Top Deals	Required (Acct. Manager)	4.0+	30%+	Premium	Dedicated event page	Restricted	None
Best Deals	Required (Seller Central)	4.0+	20%+	High	Deal event pages	Restricted	None
Lightning Deals	Required (Seller Central)	3.5+	20%+	High + Timer	Deal event pages	Selective	$300-500
Prime Exclusive Discounts	Not required	3.0+	10%+	Prime badge	Search & PDP	Broad	None
Coupons	Not required	3.0+	Any	Green clip badge	Search & PDP	Broad	$0.60/ redemption
Strikethrough/ Price Discount	Not required	None	Any	Strike-through price	PDP only	Universal	None

Top Deals: $750K+ sales forecast required for Prime Day.
Lightning Deals: 6-12 hour window with quantity limits.
Prime Exclusive Discounts and Coupons are the most broadly available levers for most brands.

- Requires Amazon nomination - not guaranteed
- Requires nomination - limited availability
- Broadly accessible - no nomination needed

Deal types fall into two broad categories:

1. **The first are Amazon-nominated placements**

Best Deals and Lightning Deals. These tend to generate the strongest visibility through dedicated placement on Amazon's event pages and prominent badging, but eligibility is determined by Amazon based on factors such as star rating, sales history, and discount depth. If an ASIN is not surfaced in Seller Central or confirmed by an Amazon account manager, it cannot participate regardless of planning or inventory position.

2. **The second are broadly accessible promotions**

Prime Exclusive Discounts, Coupons, and Strikethrough pricing. These don't require Amazon nomination and are the primary levers for most products during peak events. Prime Exclusive Discounts in particular carry a visible badge in search results and have driven strong conversion performance across Pattern's portfolio.

What it means for brands

Confirming deal eligibility by ASIN should happen well in advance of submission deadlines. For the majority of the catalog, Prime Exclusive Discounts and Coupons are the most reliable options. Where Amazon nomination is confirmed for a Lightning Deal or Best Deal, those placements should be prioritized and supported with incremental advertising investment.

About *Pattern*

Pattern is the global leader in ecommerce acceleration. Since 2013, our team of over **1,800 experts** across **18 global offices** has partnered with **hundreds of leading brands** to grow profitably on platforms including Amazon, eBay, Zalando, Allegro, and TikTok Shop.

Our data driven approach means we're closely tracking market trends and consumer behaviour in real time, especially during peak events. We help brands turn search and sales data into actionable strategy, so they're positioned to outperform during the moments that matter most.

Disclaimer

Ready to make peak season your strongest trading period?

Book a meeting with our European team.

Learn more

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